



# NEWS RELEASE

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## ***USDA Rural Development Participates In National Renewable Energy Conference***

### ***Agency Encourages More Aggressive Energy Efforts***

St. Louis, MO - USDA Rural Development State Director Chuck Banks and Kansas agency staff participated in this week's 'Advancing Renewable Energy' conference held in St. Louis, Missouri. The conference, hosted by the USDA and the U.S. Department of Energy, was attended by over 1600 participants from across the Nation to explore policies and practices to make the United States more energy independent and promote more economic development for rural America.

State Director Banks, in comments this afternoon following the close of the conference, remarked, "Our Nation and Kansas must be more aggressive in expanding renewable energy opportunities. These systems are critical for enhancing our national security, in addition to improving economic development for our rural areas and communities."

USDA Rural Development has numerous programs to assist agricultural producers, small business owners and public bodies to either establish renewable energy systems or make energy efficiency improvements. The Agency recently announced the funding of over \$261,000 in Fiscal Year 2006 energy programming assistance for eight Kansas businesses.

State Director Banks also announced today that that USDA Rural Development, along with its numerous private and public partners, will be hosting its annual USDA Energy Conference for Kansas in early 2007. Details for this energy conference will be released soon.

USDA Rural Development's mission is to deliver programs that support increasing economic opportunities and enhancing the quality of life of rural Americans. As a venture capital entity, USDA Rural Development provides equity and technical assistance to finance and foster growth in homeownership, business development, energy programs, and critical community and technology infrastructure in rural America. For additional information regarding USDA Rural Development's energy programs, or its other community and economic development programs, log onto the Agency's Kansas website at: [www.rurdev.usda.gov/ks](http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/ks) or call the Agency's state office at 785-271-2700.

**USDA Rural Development – *Committed to the Future of Rural Communities.***

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